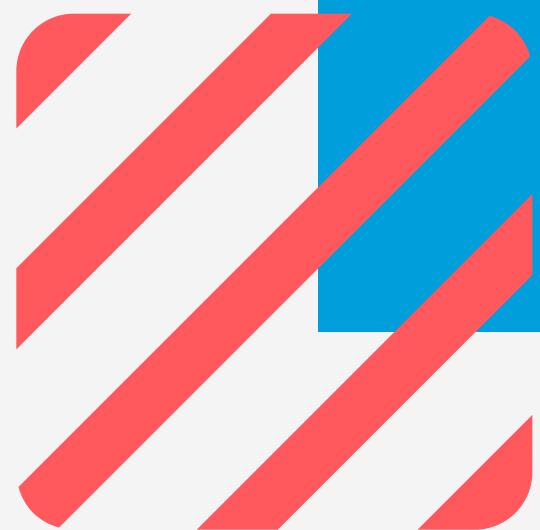
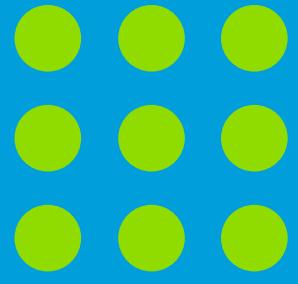


AT&T UNIVERSITY



OPERATING IN A VUCA WORLD

A guide

Welcome

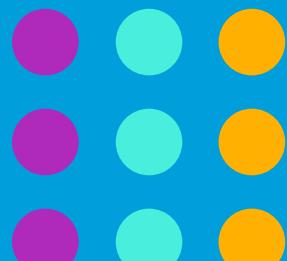


VUCA

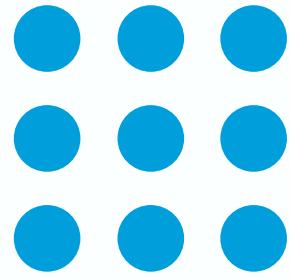
VUCA (Voo-ka) describes an element of chaos - one that is volatile, uncertain, complex, & ambiguous. AT&T is operating in a turbulent world where solvable problems have been replaced with an ongoing series of dilemmas. These challenges are unique but describable & must be addressed to succeed.

Use this guide to:

1. Recognize what VUCA is.
2. Determine which challenges are most pressing for you & your business.
3. Commit to solutions that help you lead better, learn faster, & sharpen AT&T's competitive edge in this "new normal."



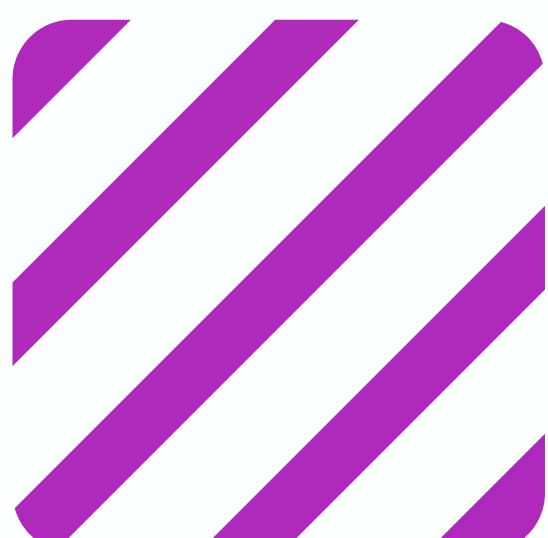
Info in this guide was attained from:
HBR Jan-Feb 2014, p.27; HR People & Strategy, V33/14, 2010

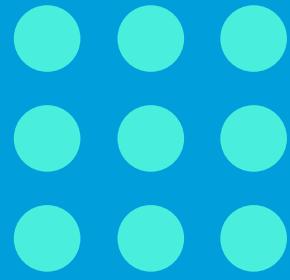


We live in a
VUCA world

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We live in a
VUCA world

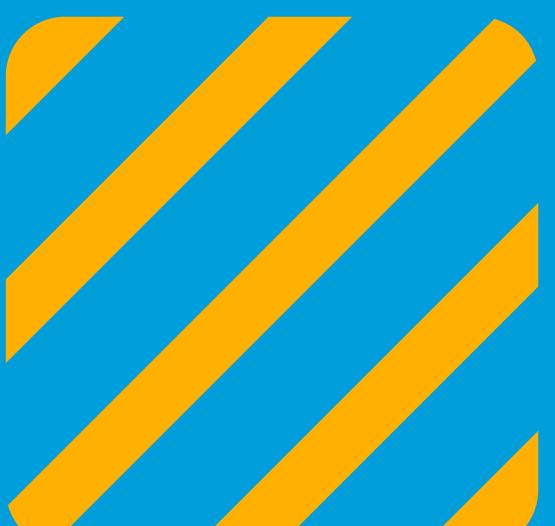
VUCA

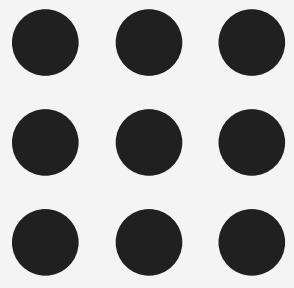
Volatile - the intense nature, speed, volume, magnitude, & dynamics of a challenge

Uncertain - the lack of predictability of issues & events

Complex - the confounding of issues and the chaos that surround any organization

Ambiguous - the haziness of reality and the mixed meanings of conditions





VOLATILE

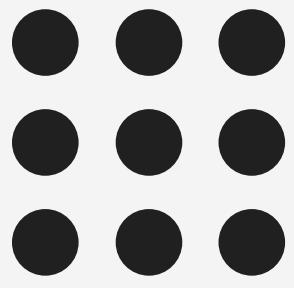


QUALITIES:

- Unexpected challenges
- Last for an unknown duration of time
- Knowledge is often readily available

EXAMPLES:

- Market fluctuations after a global pandemic
- Foreign politics affect oil prices



UNCERTAIN

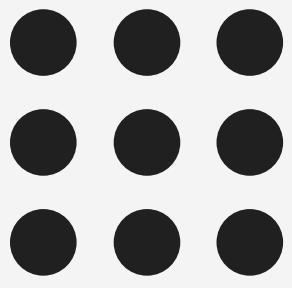


QUALITIES:

- Past actions do not have the same effects as current actions
- Forecasting outcomes made extremely difficult

EXAMPLES:

- A competitor's pending product launch muddles the future of the business & the market



COMPLEX

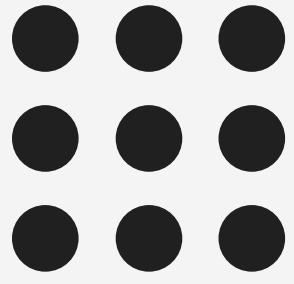


QUALITIES:

- Amount of information can be overwhelming
- Situation likely to have many interconnected parts & variables

EXAMPLES:

- Conducting business across multiple geographies, each with unique laws, cultures, & expectations



AMBIGUOUS



QUALITIES:

- Lack of knowledge about event's meaning
- Unknown unknowns
- Casual relationships are unclear
- No existing precedents

EXAMPLES:

- A product launch outside the core competencies of your business

Leadership is Critical to Navigating VUCA

**When Business
Is:**

**Leaders Must
Provide:**

Volatile → Vision

Uncertain → Understanding

Complex → Clarity

Ambiguous → Agility

Commit to Action

VISION

SET THE STAGE

Determine what ultimate success would be for the year. What would you see, hear, or feel? Mobilize this vision by ingraining it within your team & reinforcing it through your goals & operations.

REVISIT

Create opportunities to revisit your vision repeatedly (team meetings, cube signs, etc.)

FIRM BUT FLEXIBLE

As turbulence, challenges, & opportunities arise, keep your vision set on the ultimate goals, & be comfortable adjusting plans to achieve them.

UNDERSTANDING

OBSERVE

Intentionally stop, look, & listen to gather observations. Ask open-ended, purposeful questions of your team & partners to create new insights.

SEEK

Connect with peers or find a mentor who might be going through the same experience. Some uncertainties may become more certain with a new perspective.

SOLICIT

Before making significant decisions, solicit from your team & network, the information you wish you had.

CLARITY

TAKE ACTION

Set direction, prioritize, & explore possibilities. Consider interim, less than perfect solutions if they get the job done.

DECIDE

Establish a clear decision-making protocol. There's a right place & time for consensus, democratic voting, executive authority, or hands-off decision-making. Figure out those places & times for your business.

BE PROACTIVE

Work proactively to make sense of information before it becomes chaos. Challenge your team to think broadly AND specifically. Reach out cross-functionally.

Commit to Action

AGILITY

START OPPOSITE

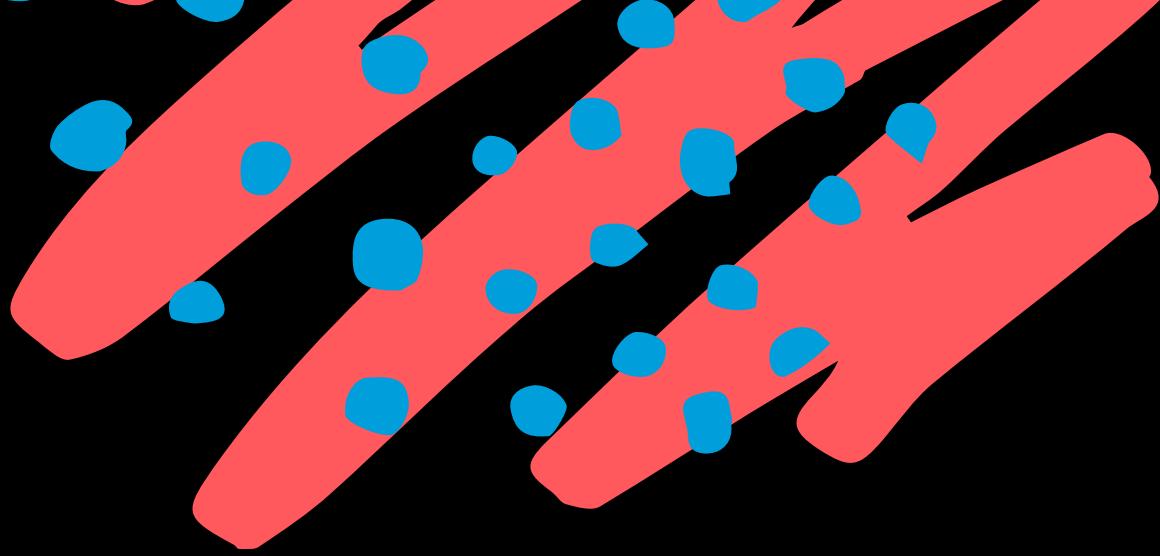
Agree on a list of your team's "non-negotiables" for achieving your vision. Hold firmly to those & be open to ever-changing conditions.

TRUST

Create a foundation of trust on your team through openness, transparency, & empowerment. Empower your people to make decisions on their own.

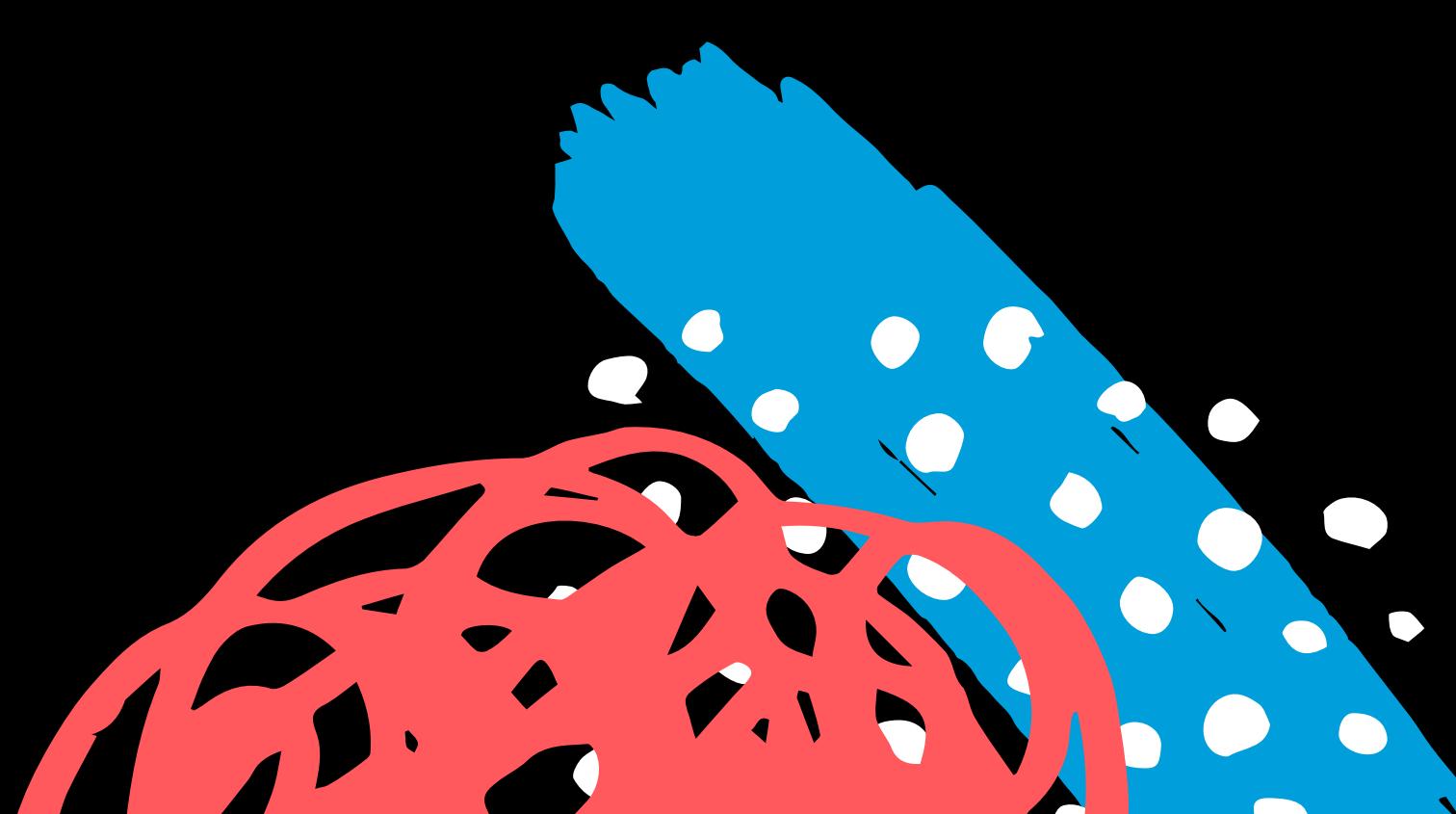
GROW

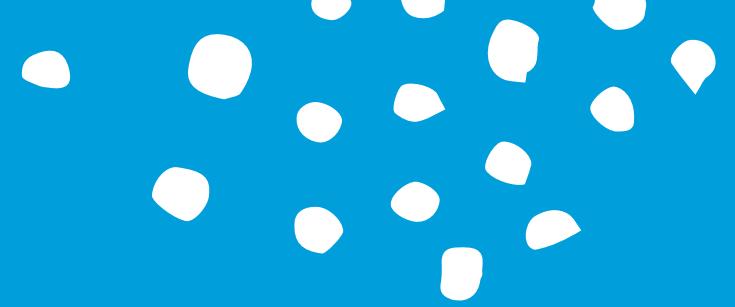
Adopt a growth mindset. Do not allow failure of a decision label you as a failure. Be accountable to but constantly think of how you could approach a similar situation differently in the future.



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Navigating VUCA Tip Cards





THE CARDS

ORGANIZED BY COLOR
FOR THE VUCA MINDSET
YOU NEED IN THE
MOMENT



Volatility > Vision



Uncertainty > Understanding

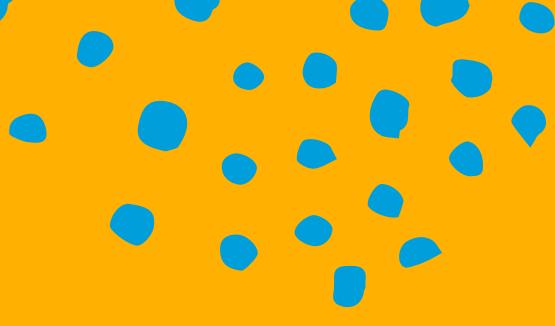


Complexity > Clarity



Ambiguous > Agility





3 ELEMENTS OF A VISION STATEMENT

What Do You Want to See?



Imagine how the future would look different. What are people physically doing, what events are happening, etc?

What Do You Want to Hear?



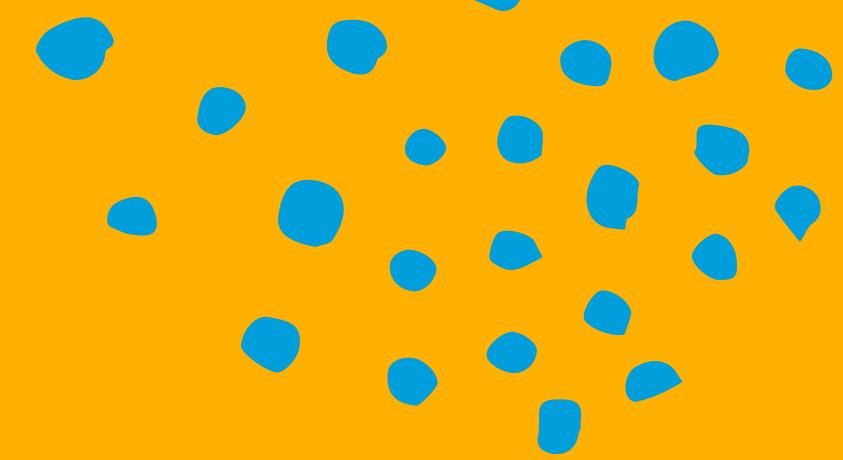
Imagine how the future would sound. What are people saying about what your team has accomplished? What are customer's reactions?

What Do You Want to Feel?



Imagine the emotions that the future would bring. What are people feeling as a result of what you've done? How is the team going to feel?

BE AWARE OF POTENTIAL TUNNEL VISION



GUARDED VISIONARY

You've been to enough rodeos that you aren't easily thrown. So when you're feeling off-kilter, your instinct is to head to a safe zone. Most likely, you reckon, you won't end up looking foolish.

You Need to Get Uncomfortable

Practice vulnerability. Yes, it's a state of being that many actively avoid, but it's also the best mindset for taking chances and seeing things differently.

DETERMINED VISIONARY

Your grit and confidence propel you forward, but underneath is a bit of desperation that you won't get to the finish line. At times like these, patience and other viewpoints go out the window.

You Need to Get Uncomfortable

A frantic state of mind takes a lot of energy, but rarely gets us anywhere. Relax and release the steel trap that's holding your brain hostage.

INFLUENCED VISIONARY

It's unusual for you to see just one side of the story but, on occasion, a prevailing point of view drowns out the alternatives. It doesn't help that your own feelings on the subject are lukewarm.

You Need to Get Uncomfortable

Trust yourself. Just below the surface are all kinds of provocative thoughts, ready to be recognized.





HOW TO ANTI-VUCA THE WORKPLACE

Avoid Gossip. Practice Empathy for Others.

Don't allow swirl and speculation about changes create disruption. Don't pass along information that isn't verified. If gossip lands in your lap, let it sit there.

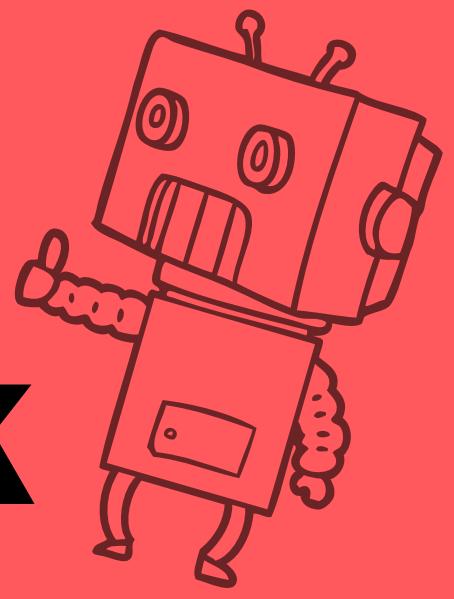
Give Yourself Credit. Practice Empathy for Yourself.

Every day, focus on your successes rather than your failures. It will help fend off negative self-talk.

Insist on Accountability Especially from Yourself. Practice Empathy for Everyone Involved.

Owning up and moving forward. Your example will show others how to focus on next steps rather than harping on past feelings.

HOW TO REMAIN HUMAN AT WORK



Treat Every Relationship as One That Matters

Valuing others builds trust and camaraderie and opens new opportunities.

Express Gratitude Liberally & Regularly

Consistently taking time to appreciate others restores connections and resets empathy.

Be Counterintuitive About When You Take Breaks

When you're on deadline, eat lunch with someone instead of at your desk. It will remind you that you are not a robot.

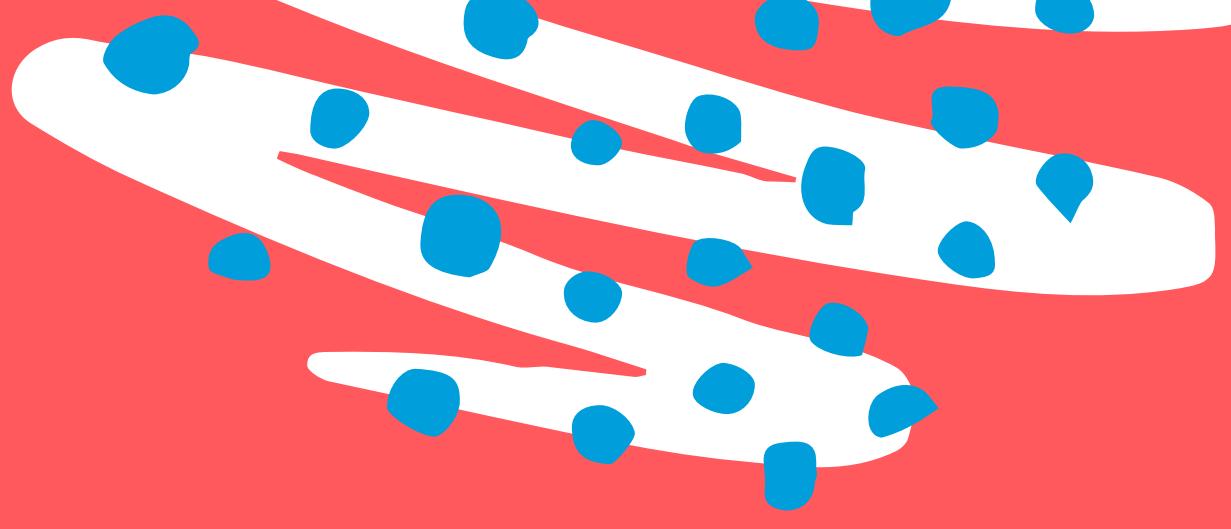
Name Your Fears & Uncertainties

If you're frustrated, angry, or defensive, take a moment to understand and articulate why. It can help you readjust your mindset.

Ask More Questions. Make Fewer Assumptions

You'll find that what you think is often not the case.





7 QUESTIONS TO ASK AFTER FEEDBACK

What are the opportunities in the criticism?

Have I considered this view of myself before?

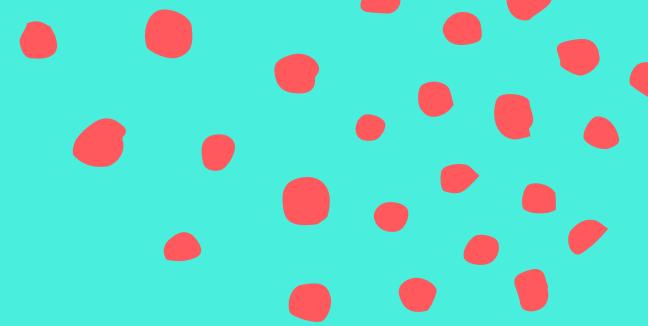
In what ways did the feedback surprise me?

What affirmations or appreciations were shared?

What actions were suggested?

What does this feedback teach me about how I'm perceived?

How does that match with how I want to be perceived?



4 PRINCIPLES ON PRODUCTIVITY

WILLPOWER IS FINITE

"We have a limited bucket of resources and activities like decision making and impulse control, and when we use these up, we don't have as much for the next activity."

Dr. Roy Baumeister from
Your Brain at Work

THE PRODUCTIVITY SWEET SPOT IS BETWEEN STRESS & RELAXATION

"A little of the mental and physical arousal caused by stress can energize and motivate. But when stress spirals out of control, it starts to hurt your performance."

The Yerkes-Dodson Law of Psychology

ANYTHING WORTH DOING IS WORTH SINGLE-TASKING

"When people do two cognitive tasks at once, their cognitive capacity can drop from that of a Harvard MBA to that of an 8-year old. It's a phenomenon called dual-task interference...If accuracy is important, don't divide your attention."

David Rock from
Your Brain at Work

CREATE ROUTINES TO FREE UP BRAIN POWER FOR CRITICAL THINKING

"I don't want to make decisions about what I'm eating or wearing. You need to routinize yourself. You can't be going through the day distracted by trivia."

- Barack Obama



5 TIPS IF YOU'RE STUCK ON START



How Much Are You Complaining?

When we complain about a change, it's often a stall tactic. And the longer we grouse or make fun of it, the harder it will be to adapt to the inevitable. Sure, we all need a minute to think things through, but then we'll be better off if we start coming to terms, one way or another, with our new reality.



What's The Least You Could Do?

If you're not getting anything done, even the teeniest completion will be an achievement. Say you're writing something. You might tell yourself, "OK, today all I need to do is come up with ideas. Tomorrow, I'll think about the prototypes." And remember, nothing gets done perfectly on the first, second, or maybe even third tries.



What Are The Consequences?

Draw a T-chart for a task that you're putting off. On one side, write down the advantages of starting now. On the other side, write all the possible consequences of starting later. Pin your chart in a visible place so you can't ignore all the benefits of not procrastinating that you came up with.



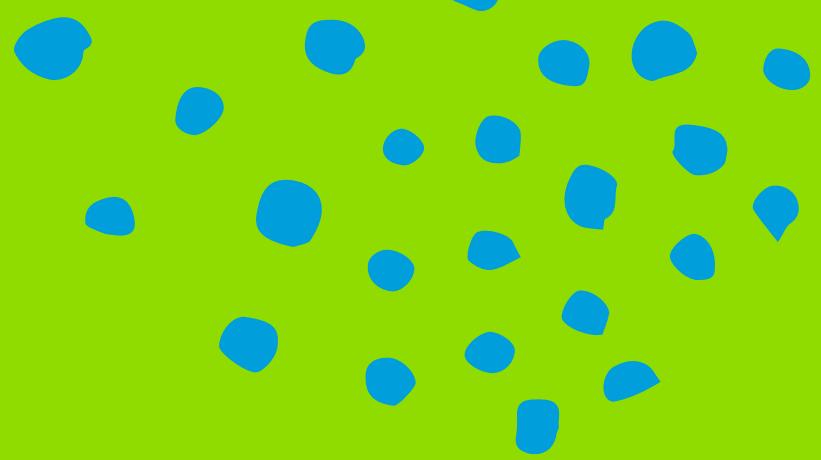
Are You Too Busy With Other Stuff?

You're busy-busy-busy getting stuff done, crossing items off your list...and actively avoiding you-know-what. But as long as you remain on the go, no one can say you don't have a good excuse, right? If you want to stop this, put only the critical items on your to-do-list, and don't let yourself stray from the agenda.



Are You Waiting For Perfect?

You can't get started, or finished, if circumstances aren't just so. So, you just don't. If you want to stop this, prove to yourself that you don't need a perfect moment to perform. Use your scraps of free time, five minutes here or twenty minutes there, to make progress.



PLAN FOR PLAN B

WHY YOU NEED A PLAN B

- Few things in life are forever. Work on your Plan B before Plan A becomes intolerable.
- If you're just coasting along, devise a Plan B that challenges and excites you.

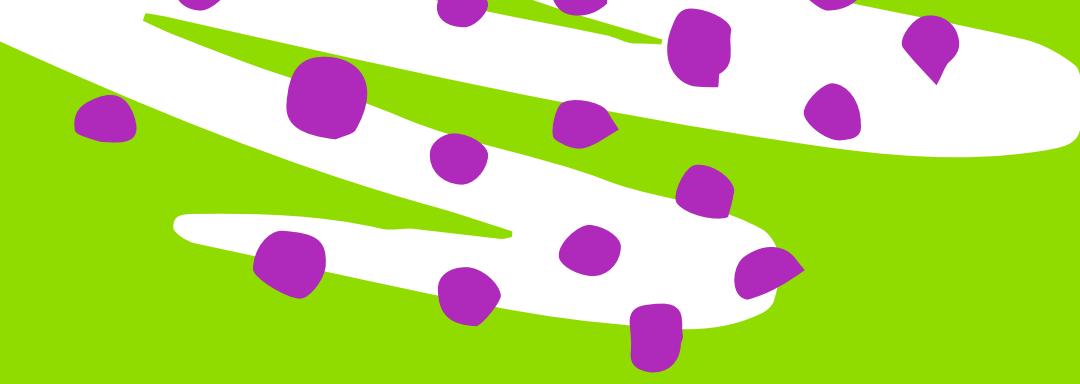
ASK YOURSELF

- How am I getting in my own way of setting up a Plan B?
- Who can help me see my situation more clearly?
- How can I break down my plan into doable chunks so I don't get overwhelmed?

REMIND YOURSELF

- The only direction is forward, and every inch is progress.
- Don't worry about perfection; focus on progress.
- Make sure you take a rest now and then.





IS FEAR GETTING IN YOUR WAY?

With your "I'm stuck" moment in mind, check yourself against these five signs that fear may be holding you back:

Do you have an all-or-nothing attitude?

If you can't do it perfectly, do you justify not trying it at all?

Do you psyche yourself out...

by imagining all the stuff that could go wrong, ignoring the possibilities of what might go right?

Do you resist what's new?

What is your gut reaction to changing a habit or routine?

Do you busy yourself with small stuff...

as a way to keep other, perhaps more valuable or important, tasks at the bottom of your to-do list?

Do you let negative emotion shut you down?

Do you allow residual guilt or shame from past "failures" do the decision-making for you?

To get to the root, ask yourself why you're not taking action. Then ask, why is that? Ask and answer "why is that?" three more times. Your last answer should be revealing.





YOU DON'T ACTUALLY LEARN W/O PRACTICE

Forget About Your Goal

Your golden carrot will only distract you practicing. It will also make the practice required to reach your goal seem tedious -- and then you won't want to do it.

Stop Judging Yourself

If you mess up, it's okay. Try again. But if you mess up and criticize yourself, you might not try again, or as well as you could. Focus your energy into learning, not scolding yourself because you're not perfect.

Stay in the Moment

Try not to measure what you're doing (how well, how long, how it compares to others), just focus on how to do it. Likewise, if your mind wanders to other topics, reel it back in.

5 TRUTHS ABOUT CHANGE & AGILITY

IT COMES FROM ASPIRATION

"Change is hope for a better planet."

- Jim Fruchterman
Founder/CEO of Benetech

SMALLER IS BETTER, AT FIRST

"Often times, people feel like they need to make big, drastic changes to make an impact. But bigger change gets done from a snowballing of smaller, progressive changes."

- Andre Ferrierira
Founder/CEO of VuAir

THERE IS NO PERFECT TIME

"Changemakers don't...wait for all the resources or the stars to be aligned. They get started and are willing to improve along the way."

- Dave Faulkner
Director of Education Changemakers

DISCOURAGEMENT IS ENCOURAGEMENT

"For any change that is worthwhile, there will always be resistance."

- Dave Faulkner

COLLABORATION RULES

"Change is rarely brought by a single person thinking about it in a room. Get together with a group of people and ask 'What if?'"

- Dennis Whittle, Founder of Global Giving & Leadership
Group Member of Ashoka Changemakers